United Nations A/67/771–S/2013/122

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
4 March 2013
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session
Agenda items 36, 53 and 61

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 28 February 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

Recent reports from various sources concur that the Israeli occupation authorities intend to move forward with an oil drilling project in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Israeli Ministry of Energy has authorized the American company Genie Energy to drill for oil in the area. The Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* stated in its issue of 21 February 2013 that the Israeli Minister of Energy, Uzi Landau, had agreed to an application from the Chief Executive Officer of Genie Energy to begin drilling.

The Syrian Arab Republic considers that, in taking such an illegal action, the occupying Power is in flagrant violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981). It seeks to consolidate its occupation and annexation, whereas the Security Council determined that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel should rescind forthwith its decision. Israel's action contravenes all of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and other international organizations, and, in particular, the General Assembly resolution entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources."

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The Syrian Arab Republic deplores Israel's dangerous attempts to exploit the current circumstances in the region to consolidate its occupation of Syrian territory and plunder its resources. Israel is blatantly violating the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources. The inalienable rights of peoples under occupation include sovereignty over their land, water and energy resources, which must not be exploited, depleted or wasted.

The Syrian Arab Republic emphasizes that, by ignoring Israel's illegal practices and its continuing violations of Security Council resolutions, the international community has encouraged Israel yet again to challenge the credibility of the United Nations and its binding resolutions.

The United Nations is now required to put an end to Israel's ongoing contempt for its resolutions and laws. The Organization must reject the double standards that grant Israel political immunity for its violations, allowing it to act as though it were exempt from its obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law in respect of the Syrian Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan.

The Syrian Arab Republic therefore demands that the Security Council and General Assembly fulfil their functions by ensuring that Israel, the occupying Power, complies with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and under international law, which prevents occupying States from undertaking any activities that could harm the integrity and natural, demographic and environmental characteristics of occupied territory.

Syria further notes that the company in question belongs to a State that is a permanent member of the Security Council. That State therefore has a dual responsibility to ensure that its companies comply with international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Syria demands that the Council should go beyond mere formal condemnation of Israel's violation of Syrian territorial integrity, and establish a mechanism compelling Israel to respect and implement Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and all other international resolutions concerning the occupied Syrian Golan.

Lastly, the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that, by taking genuine action to prevent Israel from carrying out this latest act of aggression and provocation, the United Nations would uphold the credibility of its efforts to implement its resolutions on ending the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and establish a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region in accordance with the peace process, whose parameters have been endorsed by the international community but relentlessly undermined by Israel.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 53 and 61, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative